HOW TO WRITE A PLAY REVIEW
Since plays are meant to be seen and heard rather than read, a play review is very different than a report on the play itself. It requires a discerning eye and active engagement to give constructive feedback as a member of the audience. The following is an outline of a complete theater review. *(Teachers, you may check off the elements you wish students to cover specifically.)*

Section 1: The Basics
- Who? (The playwright, the theater company), What? (the title of the play),
- Where? (the name of the theater or space in which it is playing), When? (what night did you see it, when is it running?)

Section 2: The Plot
- Give a 1-2 sentence rundown of the basic plot—but don’t give away too much!

Section 3: The Acting
- Consider the following: Were they believable? How was their volume and articulation? Did their gestures and body movement convey the character well? Were their actions strong? Did they seem to have a strong sense of imagination and spontaneity? Who did you believe to be particularly good and why?

Section 4: The Design. *Mention the designers, if at all possible. Not all design items will apply to all shows.*
- The Set: Did it establish the clear mood, time period, or place for the play? What did it look like?
- Costumes, Hair & Make Up: Did they seem to fit with the set? Were they well suited to the characters?
- What did changes in the costumes, hair and makeup say about the characters or the story as a whole?
- Sound: How did the sound effects and music contribute to the show’s mood?
- Consider other design elements: fight choreography, special effects?

Section 5: Directing, Style, and Language
- Directing: did all of the areas of the play seem to work together well? Why or why not? Were the actors’ movements on the stage clear? Did the world of the play seem complete? Was there anything truly missing that was needed? Was there too much in the play’s world making things confusing?
- Style: period understanding and details; cohesiveness of style among the actors (do they all seem like they’re in the same play?);
- Language: Was the story clear—even if you didn’t understand all of the language? Did you understand more or less of the language than you expected? Was the use of the language interesting, compelling to listen to?

Section 6: Intentions
- What do you believe is the production’s main intention? To entertain us? To make us think about something? To make us feel something? What is it? How well does it achieve that goal?
- Overall, did you like it or dislike it? Give reasons for your opinion one way or the other.

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